

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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AREA LAWMAKERS: OCTOBER 25 PUBLIC MEETINGS TO PROVIDE INFO ON NEW DRUG BENEFIT

INDIANAPOLIS – Area residents wishing to know more about the New Medicare Part D drug prescription benefit are encouraged to attend one of two separate public meetings October 25 in Monroe County, according to State Reps. Peggy Welch and Matt Pierce and State Sen. Vi Simpson (all D-Bloomington).

The meetings are scheduled to take place at 10 a.m. October 25 in The Endwright Center, 630 W. Edgewood Drive, Ellettsville, and at 6:30 p.m. October 25 at the Bloomington Adult Community Center, 349 S. Walnut Street.

The benefit, created as part of the Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003, gives seniors and disabled people already on Medicare access to drug coverage, beginning in January 2006. At that time, Medicare will begin to offer government-sponsored policies issued by insurance companies that are designed to help protect people against the rising costs of prescription drugs.

"In advance of the beginning of this benefit, insurance companies have started to contact those eligible to get them to sign up," Welch said. "Before making that decision, Rep. Pierce, Sen. Simpson and I believe people should have the opportunity to look at all the options for coverage."

Pierce added, "At these meetings, seniors will have the chance to sit down with volunteers and look at Internet Web sites and determine which policies best suit their circumstances. We encourage people to bring along their list of medications to assist in making their choice."

Representatives from all the prescription drug plans being offered in Indiana have been invited to attend both meetings.

The legislators said that the events are open to Medicare beneficiaries, their family members, care givers, and those approaching retirement.

"In recent years, Indiana has made great strides in helping older Hoosiers meet the rising costs of their prescription drugs," Simpson said. "Seniors should not be forced into choosing to spend their limited incomes on either prescription drugs, food or their heating bills. Through these programs, we hope to give Medicare beneficiaries, as well as their families and care givers, a chance to see the full array of options that can help them remain healthy."

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This news release can be accessed on the Internet at www.IN.gov/H60